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Mr. G. E. ROBERTS stated that there was no historical or geological evidence of the contemporaneity of man with *Megatherium* and *Megalonix* in South America. The evidence on that point appeared to him to be very weak.

Mr. CARTER BLAKE called attention to the tradition of the existence of various mythological beings, the giants of Ecuador and of Bolivia, as *e.g.* at Tarija. The tradition of the *cayporé* of Brazil might possibly indicate a dim remembrance of the *Protopithecus* of the Postpliocene. Careful ascertainment of the past history of individual tribes was a desideratum. At Chiriquí the "stone age" had possibly passed through several stages of development.

Sir CHARLES NICHOLSON, V.P., remarked, that the existence of the tradition *per se* really went for nothing, until we had more determinate evidence. He described the shell mounds of the Malays at length, of which the historical age was uncertain.

Notes upon the Discovery of Mammalian Bones Cut and Saun by Implements of Flint at Audley End (Essex). By GEO. E. ROBERTS, Esq., F.A.S.L.

In the course of railway works between Audley End and Saffron Walden, it became necessary to divert the course of the River Cam into a part of the meadow land bounding the stream, which was traditionally known as "the old river bed." A cutting about 20 feet deep through this, necessitated for the foundation of a wide and large culvert, to give passage to the river through the railway embankment, disclosed the following section :—

Section of the Ground at the River Cam.

Soil; 1·0 deep.

Clay ; 3·0 deep.

Peat; 12·0 deep.

* * * * * Bones.

Gravel.

Near the bottom of this "peat," and at a depth from the surface of 16 feet, an astonishing quantity of mammalian bones were found. Mr. Hanson, the contractor of the line, informed me that, out of the excavation—an area of not more than 20 feet by 60—two cart-loads of "large bones" were taken away, and sold, to be converted into bone manure. I am exceedingly sorry that earlier information of this discovery did not reach me, and that no competent person made an examination of these bones before they were thus turned to a practical agricultural account. My friend, Mr. Middleton, visiting the site of the discovery shortly afterwards, was struck with the remarkable character of some bones of *Bos* shown to him, and, with praiseworthy zeal, collected a considerable number from the heaps of peat lying on the banks of the excavated channel. The bones to which I have specially to direct your attention were among those collected by him, for though I have since visited the spot, I was able to do little beyond a verification of the section, and the collection of a few fragments of the bones of *Bos longifrons*.

The peat is, more properly, a blackish clay, with numerous fragments of wood, and a few logs of considerable size bedded in it. It is everywhere full of fluviatile shells of species common to the district, and contains many naturally-formed chips and flakes of flint, and a few rolled pebbles.

Evidently the deposit, with its organic contents, is one which has accumulated in the river-bed, both by ordinary current action, and during flood-time. Neither do I think it can be of any antiquity, beyond from two to three thousand years.

The bones which bear the artificially-made markings are the lower jaws of a small ox, probably *Bos longifrons*, though I am not aware of any remains of this well-known species having been found so small in size. From examination of the skull, it would appear also that this individual was hornless. The markings upon the lower jaw are of two kinds—broad sawn cuts, extending in two series of connected markings, from the upper end of the coronoid process to the angle of the jaw, and in one well-marked example upon the opposite side of the bone, near the broad outer end of the condyle; and, upon the other jaw, one deep cut, having clean edges, the result of the removal of a long and thin slice of bone by two cuts, just below the condyle. Another portion of bone, part of the shaft of a tibia (?) also exhibits cuts, and, as suggested to me by Dr. Falconer, bears evidence of having been split by the introduction of a chisel-shaped tool, it being impressed with such a marking as would be made by an instrument of this kind driven wedgewise into the bone. Upon the broad end of a rib (also of *Bos*) a sawn cut also appears. The whole of these cuts are undoubtedly as old as the bones themselves, the surface of the depressions caused by the removal of the pieces of bone being coloured of a brown tint corresponding with the colour of the bone. When these bones reached me they were covered with the peaty clay, in removing which, a process done very carefully by myself, the cuts became exposed. Dr. Falconer examined the whole of the bones before they were washed, and first detected the two

parallel lines of broad cuts upon the one jaw while in their uncleaned condition. One of the jaws has been extensively gnawn by small carnivores, the inferior outline being broken, and the sides of the fracture scored with teeth-markings.

A single tooth of badger(?) was found at the same level in the cutting. I regret that my search among the thousands of flint-flakes contained in the deposit for any which could be considered as artificially formed was unsuccessful, not a single one occurring which could be referred to human handicraft. My companion, Mr. Middleton, also searched with no better result.

A remarkably fine horn of the great elk, *Cervus Megaceros*, was also found in association with these bones; I believe this was saved, and is now owned by a Mr. Woods, a farmer near Saffron Walden. The basis of my opinion, that the cuts and sawings upon the bones were produced by flint implements, is their dissimilarity from markings which would be made by iron or bronze weapons upon such a material. I am supported in my belief that these incised markings and scrapings were made by an edge of flint, by Mr. Christy, who has studied these bones long and carefully. He detects in the delicate ribs left upon the surface of the scoring by a flint edge the peculiar curve in the direction of the rib which corresponds with the curved outline of the edge, and which he has found existing in all cuts and sawings made upon bone by implements of flint.

After the usual vote of thanks, Mr. ROBERTS called attention to the state of the museum at Saffron Walden, which contained many valuable remains from the collection of the late Mr. Wombwell, who was a native of that town.

Mr. HUME GREENFIELD pointed out the difficulty of assigning any definite age to the remains in question, as the geological evidence was indeterminate and vague. The presence of *Cervus megaceros*, however, appeared to indicate a higher antiquity than could be inferred from the mere stratigraphical evidence.

Mr. CARTER BLAKE commented on the interesting fact that we had evidence of the existence of a hornless breed of oxen at a period of time historically distant, though geologically recent. He congratulated the scientific world that Dr. Falconer had taken up this most interesting subject, which in such hands would be productive of results of the highest value to English Anthropology.

SIR CHARLES NICHOLSON inquired whether the differentiative points between *Bos longifrons* and *Bos primigenius* and *giganteus* were distinctly made out so far as regards the dental evidence.

Mr. CARTER BLAKE replied that the difference in the molar teeth could, he thought, be detected between *B. longifrons* and *primigenius*. The late Mr. Turner had contributed valuable memoirs to the Zoological Society on the distinction between the teeth in the various genera of ruminants. He (Mr. B.) had been for many years accumulating facts on this subject, which had an important, although indirect, bearing on Anthropology.